

Promising Practice: Nursing Career Ladder Boot Camp
90FY0004 College of Menominee Nation

College of Menominee Nation utilizes “boot camps” to address academic readiness (time management skills, test-taking skills, study skills, critical thinking skills, financial literacy, team building, etc.) among its HPOG participants. Participants are divided into groups conducted at the time of orientation at the beginning of the semester, and boot camps consist of two days of intensive workshops. During the boot camp participants are introduced to the program, and expectations from the participants are outlined. The purpose of the boot camp is to get all enrolled participants prepared for the next semester, thus increasing their chances of being successful. Each step on the career ladder has parts of the boot camp specifically designed to address the challenges participants will face at that step in the ladder as well as general sessions that are motivational or more universal.

The College of Menominee Nation HPOG participants come from diverse backgrounds and face multiple barriers. Enrolled are students who are traditional—right out of high school—and non-traditional—older with various backgrounds. Some students are single, some married; male and female; some with children, some without; some students come from stable backgrounds but others who have experienced homelessness, living in shelters or their cars. The HPOG team has looked hard at what are the barriers to success and what can we do to alleviate these barriers. Barriers include poverty, childcare issues, lack of support systems, finances, academics, and process problems which result in students not having books or ATI (Assessment Technologies Incorporated) codes at the start of classes. After barriers are identified, boot camp/orientation is tailored to working toward eliminating these barriers to facilitate student success. The development of the boot camp/orientation was designed to facilitate learning for each level of student, from the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), to the bio-science student working toward nursing, to the Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) and the Associate Degree Nurse (ADN).

This intensive approach involves pairing participants with mentors and HPOG program staff to enable participants to focus and develop their individualized training/career plans, eliminate barriers to employment, and link participants to supportive services. The purpose of the boot camp is to provide clear expectations and requirements and demands of the Nursing Career Ladder Program.

HPOG grantees can adopt the practice by implementing the following key steps:

1. Identify locations for boot camps in their geography.
2. Create shared materials to address barriers and experiences that each participant will undertake.
3. Share case management notes to ensure that retention goals are shared and pressed by case managers to participants.